THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) to (c) While improvement in functioning of all ROC offices is required, the office of ROC, Delhi & Haryana is, comparatively, well run.

(d) No applications received under sections 20, 21 and 31 of Companies Act, 1956 regarding availability of name change of name and the conversion from Public Company to Private Company respectively are pending for more than six months with ROC, Delhi. In all cases either approval has been accorded or where the companies have not supplied requisite information, intimation for closure of their case has been sent.

Restructuring of CBDT/CBEC

2072. SHRI CHO S. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that CBDT/CBEC are being restructured in order to improve the performance and increase the revenue collections;

(b) if so, the measures taken and the results of these measures;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the tax targets were not met during the last three financial years; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor and the measures taken to improve the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In the Income Tax Department, some posts have been re-designated and some cadres have been merged, keeping in view the requirements of computerization. The overall staff strength of the Income Tax Department has been reduced. Additional manpower has been provided for attending to areas of priority action. Computerization has been taken up on a massive scale. These steps are expected to result in better functional efficiency and increase in revenue collection.

The restructuring of Customs and Central Excise Department is in the stage of implementation.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Tax collection targets are fixed early in the Budget making exercise, thus requiring a fair amount of estimation. Direct taxes are dependent upon a number of economic factors, some of which are difficult to predict. Factors like instability of crude oil prices, changes in the pattern of inputs, etc. have impact on revenue collection from indirect taxes.

The measures taken to improve the situation include rationalization of tariff structure; review and withdrawal of tax exemptions, wherever necessary, plugging leakage of revenue through strengthening anti-smuggling and anti-evasion measures, monitoring and desseminating international prices of imported commodities, widening of tax base, large scale computerization, allotment of PAN numbers, simplification of tax collection procedures to improve tax compliance, etc.

Rise in inflation

2073. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government agrees with the observations of the RBI Governor that Apex Bank is comfortable with the present inflation rate which has crossed 4 per cent mark in first week of February, 2002 and the wholesale price index being 3.72 per cent as compared to a mere 1.39 per cent a year ago; and

(b) if so, whether this rise in inflation is proposed to be contained and what are the detailed steps for the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Though the uptrend in global oil prices have caused some inflationary undercurrents, pushing up the annual point to point inflation rate based on the Wholesale Price Index to 4.9 percent in mid February 2003, there is not much cause for worry, as stability in the prices of primary and manufactured products would help keep inflation under control despite the rise in fuel prices.

Government is making concerted efforts to keep inflation under control through effective supply management as also through close monitoring of prices and supply of essential commodities. Large volumes of public stock of foodgrains have ensured comfortable supply situation